(a) whether Government have a policy to lay new rail lines in backward regions of India for their development, without considering economical viability;

(b) if so, the details of the policy in this regard; and

(c) if not, whether rail lines had been laid in the backward regions during past, due to economical viability only?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) The new lines are taken up on various criteria including project oriented lines, missing links, strategic reasons and for establishment of new growth centers or giving access to remote areas. Economic and Financial viability of the project are assessed during survey stage. However, based on persistent demands from the people for the area, the elected representatives and State Governments, several new line projects have been taken up in backward and remote areas for socio-economic development.

Irregular Trains on Jalukbari-Lakhimpur Line

1168. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for irregularity of trains on the metre gauge rail line from Jalukbari to Lakhimpur and up; and

(b) what steps have been planned to remove these causes and to regularise the trains on this line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Punctuality of trains on Jalukbari (Kamakhya)—Lakhimpur section is affected due to law and order problems. The section is also flooding prone resulting in breaches during rainy season, and speed restrictions have been imposed owing to track condition affecting train speeds.

5813/5814 Murkongselek-Kamakhya Arunachal Express, which was running on alternate days from 20.5.2002 to 18.11.2002 due to breaches on the section, has been restored as a daily service from 19.11.2002.

Frequency of Rajdhani Expresses

1169. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: